

**Notice of Allowability**

Application No.

10/028,039

Examiner

Elias Desta

Applicant(s)

THATCHER ET AL.

Art Unit

2857

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to Amendment filed on 03/08/2004.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-30.
3. ☒ The drawings filed on 05 March 2002 are accepted by the Examiner.
4. ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
  - a) ☒ All    b) ☐ Some\*    c) ☐ None    of the:
    1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
    2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
    3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* Certified copies not received: \_\_\_\_\_.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

**THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.**

5. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
  6. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS ( as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
    - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review ( PTO-948) attached
      - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_.
    - (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
7. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

**Attachment(s)**

1. ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08), Paper No./Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413), Paper No./Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_
7. ☒ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

## Detailed Action

### Response to Amendment

1. Applicant's request for reconsideration of the rejection of 35 U.S.C. 102 of the last Office action in regard to claims 1, 11 and 21 of the instant application is persuasive and, therefore, the finality of that action is withdrawn.

Further, the rejection of 35 U.S.C. 103 in regard to claims 6, 7, 14, 26 and 27 is withdrawn in light of the argument presented and the recommended amendment to claims 1, 11 and 21.

### Allowance

2. Claims 1-30 are allowed. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

In reference to claims 1, 11 and 21: *Hamada et al.* (IEEE Article, 'A High-Speed Boundary Search SHMOO Plot for ULSI Memories', hereafter *Hamada*) teaches a method of testing operational boundaries (see *Hamada*, Introduction). The method includes:

- Discovering an operational range over a plurality of varying operating parameters for a device by testing points as defined by the plurality of varying operating parameters (see *Hamada*, Figs 1, 6 and page 5, section 2-1);

- Discovering an operational boundary of the device that includes a plurality of boundary points just outside of the operational range without testing all the plurality of interior operational points (see Hamada, Figs. 9 and 11, page 8, paragraphs 2 and 3).

The claimed invention provides all the features noted in Hamada, but unlike Hamada, the claimed invention carries out the test from a known interior operational single point when fully testing the device to discover adjacently coupled boundary points that define the operational boundary.

The remaining claims are dependent upon claims 1, 11 and 21 and contain further limitations.

3. Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

### Conclusion

4. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Elias Desta whose telephone number is (571)-272-2214. The examiner can normally be reached on M-Thu (8:30-7:00).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Marc S. Hoff can be reached on (571)-272-2216. The fax

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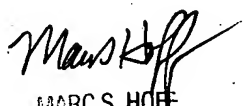
phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703)-308-5841 for regular communications and (703)-308-5841 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703)-308-1782.

Elias Desta  
Examiner  
Art Unit 2857

-ed

May 13, 2004

  
MARC S. HOFF  
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER  
TECHNOLOGY CENTER